Disposal of damaged foodgrains

492. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly five lakh metric tonnes of damaged foodgrains were disposed off during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons for such huge damage; and

(c) the manner in which the damaged foodgrains were disposed off?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) A total quantity of 4.92 lakh MTs of damaged foodgrains was disposed of by the FCI during the years 2001-02 to 2003-04.

(b) The foodgrains get damaged during storage and transit and due to various natural calamities like rains, floods, cyclones, etc. However, the damaged foodgrains constitute only a negligible percentage of the total foodgrains procurement for the Central Pool.

(c) The damaged foodgrains were sold to State owned Departments/ agencies and other bonafide users of such foodgrains and private parties registered with the FCI in this behalf. Some stocks of feed category damaged foodgrains were also released to the State Governments, Animal Welfare Board of India and *Goshalas* in drought hit States as cattle feed free of cost.

Hoarding and black marketing of sugar

†493. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether incidents of hoarding and black marketing of sugar have come to fore in the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to prevent the same;

(c) whether Government are going to import sugar; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.